COUNTY OF ORANGE, VIRGINIA PERSONNEL POLICIES MANUAL

PERFORMANCE PLANNING, EVALUATION, AND MERIT PAY

POLICY NO.: 2.3 EFFECTIVE: 11/01/96

REVISED: 07/01/05

07/09/13

OVERVIEW: The County is committed to identifying performance expectations and goals for each employee; the criteria upon which the employee's performance will be evaluated; fairly and on a scheduled basis evaluating performance; and recognizing those performing at the highest level with

increased pay.

SCOPE: This policy applies to all regular full-time employees and part-time employees who have worked 520 hours during the 12 month performance cycle.

DEFINITIONS:

1. <u>Performance Cycle:</u> The year long period which begins and ends on an employee's

anniversary date and during which the employee's performance

provides the basis for his/her performance evaluation rating.

2. <u>Anniversary Date:</u> The employee's date of hire, date changed to full-time status, date

assumed current position, or other date established for rendering annual evaluations. No anniversary dates will be established in June.

Those normally falling in June will be established in May.

3. Merit Pay: An increase in salary that may be awarded after receipt of a

performance evaluation that clearly identifies the employee as being among the top performers in the County during the previous year.

PROVISIONS:

A. When:

Performance Evaluations will be rendered at the end of an employee's six month probationary period and yearly on or about the employee's anniversary date.

Orange County Policy 2.3 (p. 2)

When earned, merit pay increases will be effective the first full month after approval of the performance evaluation and award by the County Administrator.

B. Designation of Rating Officials:

Each Constitutional Officer and Department Director will develop a rating plan that will identify each member of the organization and that person's rating official. It will also show the month in which the evaluation is due. In those cases where the rating official is someone other than the Constitutional Officer or Department Director, the Constitutional Officer or Department Director will approve the report. In all cases where the rating official is not the Constitutional Officer or Department Director, the rating official must be rated by the Constitutional Officer or Department Director. The rating plan will be kept current based on changes in personnel or responsibilities, and a copy will be maintained on file in Human Resources.

All employees will be provided a copy of the departmental rating plan.

C. <u>Performance Expectations:</u>

Performance expectations shall be primarily based upon performance of the duties and responsibilities identified in the employee's position description. Other expectations are the factors included in the evaluation instrument along with any goals or objectives established for the employee by the rating official.

At the beginning of the performance cycle, the rating official and employee meet to discuss the performance expectations, goals, objectives, the evaluation process and instrument, and the basis for award of merit pay.

D. Evaluation Process:

The evaluation process is continuous, but the evaluation will be documented at the end of the performance cycle using an approved evaluation instrument. Many may find it useful to begin preparation of the written evaluation by having the rated employee complete a self-evaluation using the appropriate evaluation instrument. When done, this document can serve as both input to the rater's evaluation and as a basis for discussion when the rater reviews his or her actual evaluation with the employee.

In any case, the employee's rating official prepares the performance evaluation which describes how the employee's performance compared to the expectations. The rating official also identifies any mitigating circumstances or changes in expectations or job duties that occurred during the performance cycle.

Orange County Policy 2.3 (p. 3)

Once complete, the evaluation is first reviewed by the appropriate Department Director or Constitutional Officer, if different than the rating official. Then the employee reviews the evaluation and is given an opportunity to document his/her comments concerning the evaluation.

The evaluation will document if a merit pay increase has been recommended and the amount of the recommendation. Evaluations must be completed by the end of the anniversary month and forwarded to Human Resources.

If the employee fails to meet the standards for satisfactory work, the employee will be so notified, placed on probation, and reevaluated in 3 months. If the employee fails to make satisfactory progress during this three month period, he or she may be recommended for termination of employment.

E. Merit Pay:

Each year in the budget process, the Board of Supervisors may approve an amount of money to be used to provide salary increases to the top-performing County employees. Once budgeted, these funds will be disbursed only upon approval of the County Administrator.

It is envisioned that annual cost of living increases may continue to be approved by the Board of Supervisors. Merit pay is not intended to reward satisfactory performance by a good, loyal employee or to keep employees equitably paid relative to other counties or civilian employers. The County will attempt to use other means to ensure its pay is fair and competitive.

In any single fiscal year, it is expected that only a percentage of eligible employees may earn merit pay, if merit pay is approved by the Board. The number actually to be awarded merit pay will be determined by the County Administrator following Constitutional Officers' or Department Directors' determination of those persons whose performance distinguishes them from their peers. Merit pay will be based on overall performance appraisal ratings and matters such as achievement of objectives, level of effort, and specific actions/performance that make the person stand out from other employees.

At the beginning of the fiscal year, each Constitutional Officer and Department Director may be allocated a portion of any merit pay funds for planning purposes. The amount will be determined based on criteria established by the County Administrator. Also at the beginning of the year, those officials will submit a merit pay plan (tentative determination of those who will get merit pay and how much) to the County Administrator for approval. If the

Orange County Policy 2.3 (p. 4)

departmental plan meets the intent of this policy, the County Administrator will approve the plan and return it for use by the department during the year. If the plan does not meet the intent, the County Administrator will return it with instructions for its revision.

Department Directors will be evaluated by the County Administrator and be eligible for merit pay taken from a separate "pool" of funds.

Upon completion of a performance evaluation, the Constitutional Officer or Department Director will determine if, in his or her judgment, the employee's performance is worthy of recognition with merit pay. In doing so, he or she must both live within the annual allocation of funds and adhere to the principal that only the most deserving of his or her employees receives merit recognition. In this regard, it is important for the Constitutional Officer or Department Director to make his or her recommendation based on how well they perform, not the importance of the individual to the organization (generally higher graded people are more critical). It is entirely possible under this concept that the lowest graded person could receive the largest merit pay increase. Adherence to the preliminary plan is not required and changes (within the funds allotted) may be made if circumstances so warrant.

If, during the evaluation year, a Constitutional Officer or Department Director believes there are compelling reasons why he or she should be provided additional funds for merit pay, he or she may submit a request for those funds, with supporting justification, to the County Administrator. Approval will not be granted when the need results primarily from poor planning for the use of the allocated merit pay or careless execution of the approved plan. Approval may be granted in exceptional instances where the performance of the organization as a whole has greatly exceeded the normal high standards of performance expected of government agencies or when the organization has accomplished an objective of particular importance to the County and produced results clearly evident at the Board of Supervisors' level.

F. Appeal:

An employee may appeal the evaluation which he/she perceives as incorrect or is based on illegal bias. The appeal is submitted through the chain of supervision to the County Administrator. If substantive issues have been raised that, in the opinion of the County Administrator merit further review, he or she may take direct action to resolve the issues or chose to refer the matter to an Appeals Committee established for the purpose of determining the facts of the matter.

All appeals must be initiated within two weeks of presentation of the evaluation to the employee for signature.

Orange County Policy 2.3 (p. 5)

If the Appeals Committee establishes that there has been an error in fact or unlawful bias in the preparation of the evaluation, it will recommend corrective action to the County Administrator. The County Administrator has final determination on what, if any, action shall be taken.

No appeal will be referred to the Appeals Committee or otherwise upheld when the basis for appeal is simply a disagreement with the judgments and/or assessments made by the rating official in rendering the report. Appeals will be determined to have merit only when there are credible allegations that policies were not followed, the facts presented in the evaluation are wrong, or the rating official acted with improper or illegal bias in rendering the report.

G. Evaluation Instruments:

County Evaluation Forms:

- Persons in their probationary period will be evaluated under the provisions of Policy 2.2.
- Employees who are not in a supervisory position will be evaluated using Orange County Form 2.3.1.
- Employees, who are in a supervisory position but are not Department Directors, will be evaluated using Orange County Form 2.3.2.
- Department Directors will be evaluated using Orange County Form 2.3.3.
- Part time employees will be evaluated using Orange County Form 2.3.4.

Public Safety Evaluation Forms:

E-911 employees will be evaluated using the following forms:

- Orange County Emergency Communications Center Employee Performance Evaluation Orange County Form 2.3.5
- Standardized Evaluation Guidelines for E-911 Yearly Evaluations Orange County Form 2.3.6

Fire/EMS employees will be evaluated using the following forms:

- Orange County Department of Fire & EMS Employee Performance Evaluation Firefighter Medic/EMT Orange County Form 2.3.7
- Orange County Department of Fire & EMS Employee Performance Evaluation Company Officer – Orange County Form 2.3.8

Orange County Policy 2.3 (p. 6)

Sheriff's office employees will be evaluated using the following forms:

- Administrative Assistant Evaluation Form 2.3.9
- Animal Control Deputy Evaluation Form 2.3.10
- Animal Control Deputy Supervisor Evaluation Form 2.3.11
- Captain Evaluation Form 2.3.12
- Chief Deputy Evaluation Form 2.3.13
- Communications Officer Evaluation Form 2.3.14
- Communications Officer Supervisor Evaluation Form 2.3.15
- Court Security Evaluation Form 2.3.16
- Court Security Supervisor Evaluation Form 2.3.17
- Courthouse Control Room Evaluation Form 2.3.18
- Crime Analyst Records Clerk Evaluation Form 2.3.19
- Investigator Evaluation Form 2.3.20
- Investigator Supervisor Form 2.3.21
- Patrol Deputy Evaluation Form 2.3.22
- Patrol Deputy Supervisor Form 2.3.23
- SRO Deputy Evaluation Form 2.3.24
- SRO Deputy Supervisor Evaluation Form 2.3.25
- Triad Coordinator Evaluation Form 2.3.26

H. Records:

Employee performance evaluations are maintained in the employee's personnel file.

I. <u>Uses of Performance Evaluation:</u>

In addition to determining merit pay, performance evaluations may be used for the following purposes:

- to provide the employee with valuable feedback on how well he or she is performing a job.
- as a factor in determining the order of layoffs.
- to help identify training needs.
- as a factor in determining promotion, transfer, demotion or dismissal.